



FLORIDA STATE LAW

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2008 FLORIDA STATE LAW GRADUATE RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

TALLAHASSEE—Donna Duncan, a spring 2008 graduate of the Florida State University College of Law, has received the Clinical Legal Education Association's Outstanding Student Award. The award is presented annually to law students who have excelled in clinical education.

Duncan, an Apalachicola native, received the national award for her leadership in researching, drafting and advocating for the Children in Prison Rehabilitation Act, a legislative project of the law school's Public Interest Law Center (PILC).

"I was very excited and honored to have received this award," said Duncan, who was a corrections officer before entering law school. "I am thankful for the opportunity to have worked on such an important issue and to have worked with motivated and talented interns. I dedicate [the award] to our outstanding clients."

The Children in Prison Rehabilitation Act would provide children who committed crimes at 15 years of age or younger the possibility of parole after serving eight years in prison, if they meet stringent requirements. Although the legal reform legislation failed during the 2008 session, Duncan's efforts will be critical to future attempts to pass the act.

"Donna secured state house and senate sponsors to file the bill for the 2008 legislative session. Along with other students, she met 14 legislators and garnered their support for the act," said Clinical Professor Paolo Annino, co-director of the PILC.

"Donna's leadership and her compassion for kids in adult prison make her very deserving of this honor."

The PILC, which consists of Children's Law and Family Law clinics, is home to one of the nation's leading legal internship programs. Its mission is to instill in law students a sense of professional responsibility and to create a pool of future lawyers trained and motivated to do pro bono work on behalf of children and other under-represented individuals.

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